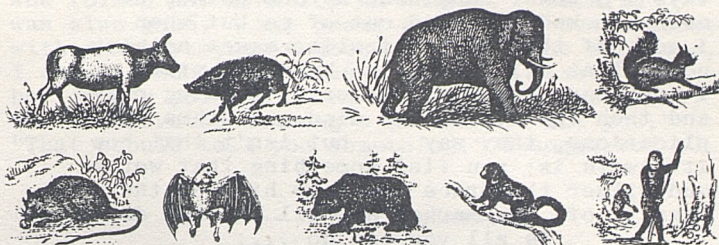


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# TRICIA'S SKILLET

the aroma of crisp bacon  
has wakened me like no alarm clock  
ever could. I go to the kitchen  
and there is my wife, cracking eggs  
on the side of a hot, cast-iron skillet.  
"Over easy?" she asks. I nod ...  
she is using THE skillet; the one great  
aunt Eloise gave her grandmother as  
a wedding gift; the one her grandmother  
gave to her mother, who, in turn, passed  
down to Trish. it's the blackest pan  
I've ever seen and it's probably fried  
bushels of eggs. shaking a little pepper  
on the eggs' faces, she turns them over  
as gently as a kiss. our daughter comes in,  
pajama'd, rubbing the sleep out of one  
eye and asks, "How long 'til breakfast?"  
for some reason, I step into the future,  
thinking of that dark inheritance and this  
same scene, years and years from now ....